

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Big Rose Farms Colony Inc. 6" C-900 water pipeline Land Use License # 8525	Proposed Implementation Date: July 11, 2006
Proponent: Big Rose Farms, Inc., PO Box 146, Sunburst, MT 59482 ph# 937-3045	
Type and Purpose of Action: Big Rose Farms has applied for a land use license to install an 6" inch C-900 water pipeline across approximately 1.75 miles of state land. The pipeline will service water for domestic purposes for the Big Rose Colony. Subsequent to the land use license, it is the applicant's intent to apply for and secure an easement for the pipeline.	
Location: E½ , Sec 36, T33N, R3W SW¼NW¼, SE¼SW¼, SW¼NE¼, Sec 8, T33N, R3W	County: Toole
Trust: Section 36 – Common Schools Section 8 – Public Buildings	

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.	NRCS – EQIP City of Shelby – Water Purchase Contract DEQ – Domestic water permit
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	None
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	Approve the land use license request. No action. Do not approve the land use license.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCE	[Y/N]	POTENTIAL IMPACTS
		N = Not Present or No Impact will occur. Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)
4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?		[N] Soils and geology in this area are suitable for pipeline installation. An excavator will be used to install the pipeline to 6-7 feet deep. Soil and overburden will be returned to the trench and packed following installation. A limited amount of soil disturbance will occur during construction, but all disturbed areas will be reclaimed to preexisting conditions. Cumulative impacts on soil resources are not expected.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] The water source for this project is the City of Shelby municipal system. Big Rose Farms has a water purchase contract with the City of Shelby that allows them to purchase 2,000,000 gallons of water per month, at a rate not to exceed 66,000 gallons per day. No other impacts to the water resources are expected.
6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] The proposed action will not impact air quality.
7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] The proposed pipeline will cross 1.75 miles of native rangeland. The existing vegetation on the native rangeland will be temporarily disturbed during construction activities. However, disturbed areas will be reclaimed and reseeded with similar native vegetation following construction. Overall, no long-term negative and/or cumulative impacts to the vegetation resources are expected.
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] This area is not considered valuable and/or critical wildlife habitat. Temporary displacement of local wildlife species may occur, but wildlife usage following construction will return to normal. No long-term negative affects on existing wildlife species and/or wildlife habitat are expected.
9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] There are no threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitat types, or other species of special concern associated with the proposed project area.
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	[N] A cultural resource inventory was completed by the DNRC Archaeologist (Patrick Rennie) and the Conrad Unit Office on June 28, 2006. Attached is a topo map with the locations of the surface stone features we identified on the two state land parcels as well as the route of the proposed waterline. Several stone circles are situated very close to, or within, the project area of potential effect. The minor modifications we made to the proposed water line route which allow complete avoidance of all cultural features on state lands. Although site avoidance is preferred that is not an option for this undertaking. As currently planned ground disturbing activities associated with proposed waterline should avoid all stone circles by a minimum of 10 ft. As such, no Heritage Properties should be affected with proposed waterline developments and no additional archaeological investigative work is currently recommended for this project.
11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] The proposed action will not change the aesthetics of the landscape. The 6" pipeline will be buried underground and therefore will not be visible. No other changes to the aesthetics character of the land area expected.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] The applicant has an water purchase contract from the City of Shelby which will provide the water supply for the project. The demand on other environmental resources will not be affected by the proposed action. The proposed action will not consume resources that are limited in the area. There are no other projects in the area that will affect the proposed project.
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of other private, state or federal current actions w/n the analysis area, or from future proposed state actions that are under MEPA review (scoping) or permitting review by any state agency w/n the analysis area?	[N] Currently, there are no other studies, plans, or projects associated with the proposed project area.

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	[Y] The proposed project will improve the health of the Colony by providing a reliable and safe water source for domestic use.
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[Y] The proposed pipeline will disturb less than 5 acres of native rangeland. Following reclamation, these areas will be retuned to historic production levels. This minimal amount of surface damage is not expected to significantly affect the lessee's farming and ranching operations. In fact, the pipeline will also provide livestock water sources on private land, which will benefit the lessee's ranching operation. The installation of this pipeline will provide a reliable water source for the Colony.
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number. Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[Y] The proposed action will create short term construction jobs and generally add to the economy of surrounding communities.
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[Y] The proposed action will slightly add to tax revenue.
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] This project will not add demand for government services.
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	[N] The proposed action is in compliance with State and County laws. The applicant has secured a water purchase contract with the City of Shelby. No other management plans are in effect for the area.
20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] State land tracts are rural and generally have low recreational value. The proposed action is not expected to impact general recreational activities on this state land.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] The proposed action will not change the human population distribution or the housing requirements in the area.
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[N] The proposed action will not alter the social structure of surrounding native communities.
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[N] The proposed action will not impact the cultural uniqueness and/or the cultural diversity of the area.
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES: Is there a potential for other future uses for easement area other than for current management? Is future use hypothetical? What is the estimated return to the trust. Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[Y] The applicant will be required to compensate the school trust (Common Schools and Public Buildings for the installation of this pipeline (land license fees and future easement fees).

EA Checklist Prepared By: _____ Erik Eneboe _____ Conrad Unit Manager - CLO _____ Date: July 14, 2006
 Title

IV. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Issue Land Use License authorizing installation of the 6" pipeline across state land
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	Significant impacts will not occur as a result of installing the buried waterline. There are no threatened or endangered species associated with these lands. The project will come in close proximity to several stone circles associated with Native American Heritage activities. The circles location has been identified and the line was re-routed to avoid impacts. Other mitigation measures such as seeding to avoid weed infestations are common and accepted effective practices.
27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis: <input type="checkbox"/> EIS <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis	

EA Checklist Approved By: _____ Garry Williams _____ Area Manager - CLO
 Name _____ Title _____

Garry Williams
 Signature _____ Date 7/13/06